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THE ASH INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES FINALISTS FOR IBM INNOVATIONS AWARD IN TRANSFORMING GOVERNMENT

Five Programs from Across the Globe to Compete for \$100,000 Award

Cambridge, Mass., – September 12, 2007 – The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government today announced the finalists for the \$100,000 IBM Innovations Award in Transforming Government. The programs were selected by a distinguished panel of experts as exemplary transformative government programs for their innovation, measurable results, collaborative practices, scope and potential global replication.

The winner from this prestigious finalist group will be announced at the Ash Institute's Innovations in American Government Awards twentieth anniversary dinner and reception on September 24, 2007. Former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill will deliver the keynote address and eight \$100,000 government program winners will be honored including the IBM-sponsored award winner. This event will launch a year long twentieth anniversary celebration of the Ash Institute's Innovations in American Government Awards Program.

The five finalists are:

- **Government of Georgia Comprehensive Reforms, Georgia**

Since the 2003 Rose Revolution, the Government of Georgia has undergone sweeping reforms to encourage a newfound dedication to democracy, economic revitalization and modernization. Led by the Office of the State Minister on Reforms Coordination, the country has implemented key reforms in licensing, tax and customs, labor codes, privatization and anticorruption measures. Such positive changes were recognized by the World Bank's recent "Doing Business," survey: Georgia moved from a ranking of 152 to 42 in ease of licensing and permitting practices.

- **Grants Center for Excellence, US**

The Grants Center for Excellence is an innovative electronic government initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The program consolidates the IT management of more than 80 grants which collectively distribute \$60 billion in government funds to food, medical care, shelter and education assistance programs. Such consolidation has reduced operating costs by 75 percent and allows grant programs to spend more money on the actual service programs they support.

- **Real-Time Crime Center, US**

The Real-Time Crime Center (RTCC) provides New York City Police Department officers with instantaneous crime information to help identify patterns, halt emerging trends and assist with crime scene investigation. Built by seasoned crime investigators, the RTCC platform enables immediate access to a data warehouse of criminal information across multiple databases. Accessing such critical information used to take hours or even days; the new system's immediate access capabilities allow officers more time in the community deterring criminal activity.

- **Service Canada, Canada**

A collaboration of fourteen federal departments and multiple community organizations, Service Canada combines government benefits and programs together into a single delivery network. Citizens can easily access social services information and submit requests online, by phone, mail or in person. The system is personalized to each citizen's needs and serves as a viable solution for communicating the range of services available across all areas of government.

- **Trail-Blazing Transformation in Vocational and Technical Education, Singapore**

Formerly a last resort for low-achieving students, Singapore's Institute of Technical Education (ITE) underwent a 10-year reform plan revamping irrelevant curriculum, upgrading learning environments and instating new academic requirements for current teachers. As a result, the program reports a 33 percent increase in graduation rates and a 50 percent increase in students enrolled between 1995 and 2006. Over the last decade, 90 percent of ITE students have graduated with high-paying industry careers.

"IBM salutes the five finalists in the IBM Innovations Award in Transforming Government Program," said Todd Ramsey, general manager of IBM Global Government and Education. "IBM sponsored this year's award to encourage governments to share their successes in addressing societal challenges with others. We are inspired by the caliber of government programs being considered for the award. All of the finalists have brought forth programs that are truly innovative, transformative and worthy of special recognition."

"We are pleased to celebrate the creativity, resourcefulness and cooperation demonstrated by these five programs," said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Program at the Ash Institute. "From improving access to valuable criminal information to implementing key reforms in how government runs, these programs represent the breadth of

possibilities available in government reform and act as best practices from which governments around the world can learn.”

About The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation

The Roy and Lila Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, publications, leadership training, global network and awards program – developed in collaboration with a diverse, engaged community of scholars and practitioners - the Ash Institute fosters creative and effective government problem-solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world’s citizens. The Ford Foundation is a founding donor of the Ash Institute. Additional information about The Ash Institute is available at www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu. Organizations are encouraged to apply to the 2008 Innovations in American Government Awards by October 15, 2007 at www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu.